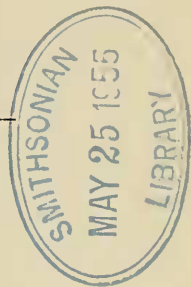


PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

A NEW SUBSPECIES OF *BLARINA BREVICAUDA*
FROM FLORIDA

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Field work in February and March, 1954 in the vicinity of Fort Myers, Lee County, Florida resulted in the taking of 27 shorttail shrews in a restricted area. These shrews are recognizably distinct from *Blarina brevicauda peninsulæ* and *Blarina brevicauda carolinensis*.

Blarina brevicauda shermani, subsp. nov.

Type.—Adult female; skin and skull; Cornell University Mammal Collection Number 8026; two miles north of Fort Myers, Lee County, Florida. Collected February 13, 1954, by W. J. Hamilton, Jr., original number 4280. The type has the following measurements (in millimeters): total length, 115; tail, 23; hind foot, 15; condylobasal length, 21.6; cranial breadth, 10.7; interorbital breadth, 5.5; palatal length, 8.8; maxillary breadth, 7.3; maxillary tooth row, 8.3. Weight 14 grams. Skull measurements follow those of Jackson (N. A. Fauna 51, 1928). This shrew is named for Dr. Harley B. Sherman, who has contributed materially to our knowledge of Florida mammalogy.

Diagnosis.—A medium sized dark *Blarina*, larger and darker than *peninsulæ*. Adult winter pelage darker than other races of *brevicauda*. The dark pelage, without trace of brown, combined with the larger size, both in body proportions and skull, serves to distinguish this *Blarina* from other Florida races. Skull robust, the cranium and rostrum relatively broad.

Comparisons.—This presumably isolated subspecies may at once be separated from other recognized Florida forms by its darker pelage and larger size. Comparable measurements of *shermani*, *peninsulæ* and *carolinensis*, all from Florida, are presented in Table 1.

Remarks.—As with most *Blarinas*, this race occupies a variety of habitat. In 4000 trap nights in the type locality (one mile north of the Edison Bridge that spans the Caloosahatchee River and a quarter mile east of Route 41, specimens were taken in drainage ditches overgrown to grass, and in the tunnels of *Scalopus aquaticus bassi*. All specimens were adult, the males with enlarged testes and most of the females with turgid vagina and swollen uterine horns, although no macroscopic evidence of embryos was apparent. This relatively large shrew appears to occupy an isolated area well removed from *peninsulæ* to the north and south. That it has not been previously described suggests a "blind

spot'' in Florida mammal collecting. In the same habitat with this shrew, *Oryzomys*, *Sigmodon*, *Peromyscus gossypinus* and *Cryptotis* were taken. Previous collecting (2000 trap nights) south of the Caloosahatchee River in Fort Myers in the spring of 1939 and 1940 did not yield a *Blarina*. Nor did collecting on Pine Island, Lee County, provide evidence of this shrew in 1954. Presumably it has a general distribution on the west coast of the southern Florida peninsula; this must wait on further collecting. For the loan of specimens, I am indebted to H. B. Sherman, University of Florida; H. E. Anthony, American Museum of Natural History, W. H. Burt, University of Michigan; Viola S. Schantz, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Richard Archbold, Lake Placid, Florida. Comparisons have been made with specimens in the Cornell collection. Paratypes have been deposited in the U. S. National Museum.

TABLE I. AVERAGE AND EXTREME MEASUREMENTS IN MILLIMETERS OF FLORIDA BLARINA

	Length	Tail	Hind foot	Weight grams	Condylo-basal length	Cranial breadth	Inter-orbital breadth	Palatal length	Max. breadth	Max. tooth row
<i>B. b. shermani</i> (27 skins and 25 skulls; weights of 27)	Ave.	109	23.5	14.1	13.8	21.0	10.8	9.0	7.3	7.9
	Max.	116	25	15	17.0	21.6	11.2	9.4	7.5	8.5
	Min.	100	22	13.5	11.1	20.4	10.4	5.4	7.2	7.3
<i>B. b. peninsulæ</i> ¹ (21 skins and 7 skulls; weights of 10)	Ave.	97	21.3	12	9.9	20	10.5	5.3	6.7	7.5
	Max.	110	25	14	11.0	20.5	10.6	5.4	8.9	7.8
	Min.	82	18	10	8.1	19.8	10.2	5.2	6.6	7.3
<i>B. b. carolinensis</i> ² (17 skins and skulls; weights of 11)	Ave.	92.2	21	12.5	8.0	19.3	10.3	5.2	6.6	7.0
	Max.	102	26	14	10.3	20.1	10.8	5.0	7.0	7.3
	Min.	84	18	11.5	5.5	18.1	9.7	5.5	6.2	6.4

¹The *peninsulæ* examined include topotypes and specimens from Highland and Collier County, Florida.

²The *carolinensis* collected in Alachua and Putnam counties, Florida.